

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

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DRAFTED BY:EUR/RPE:ROHOMME
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P 280450Z AUG 75
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TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 203729

EXDIS

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT TO LONDON INFO BONN
THE HAGUE PARIS LISBON EC BRUSSELS NATO USDEL SECRETARY
DTG O 270332Z AUG 75 FM SECSTATE WASHDC

QUOTE SECRET STATE 203729 TOSEC 100208

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UK

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE POLITICAL CRISIS AND ALLIED
DEMARCHES
REF: STATE 202520

1. UK CHARGE MORTON CALLED ON COUNSELOR SONNENFELDT
AUGUST 26 TO CONVEY "OFFICIAL THINKING" IN RESPONSE SPIERS'
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AUGUST 26 DEMARCHE TO BRIMELOW. MORTON REITERATED POINTS
SET FORTH LONDON 13154 AND EMPHASIZED FOLLOWING.

2. NATO. MORTON SAID THEY "PRETTY WELL AGREED" WITH TALK-

ING POINTS CARLUCCI HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO MAKE GONCALVES, WITH ONE EXCEPTION. THAT WAS NATO. UP TO NOW CALLAGHAN HAD BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO SEEM TO USE NATO MEMBERSHIP AS THREAT BUT INSTEAD, FOR TACTICAL REASONS, TO GIVE PORTUGAL NORMAL TREATMENT OF NATO ALLY. SONNENFELDT POINTED OUT THAT NATO ARGUMENT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE AMONG SOME PORTUGUESE POLITICAL ELEMENTS.

3. DISADVANTAGES TO MELO ANTUNES. MORTON SAID THERE WAS SOME APPREHENSION IN LONDON, THAT MELO ANTUNES HIMSELF MIGHT NOT BE AWARE OF THE DISADVANTAGES TO HIM OF OUTSIDE DEMARCHES ON HIS BEHALF. THEY HAD NOT HELPED IN MARCH, AND THE COMMUNISTS CONTROLLED THE MEDIA NOW.

4. CIVIL WAR. MORTON SAID THAT WHEN AMBASSADOR TRENCH SAW COSTA GOMES A FEW DAYS AGO, THE LATTER HAD SAID THAT THE KEY TO ALL HIS ACTIONS WAS A DESIRE TO AVOID CIVIL WAR AT ALL COSTS. HE WANTED TO PRESERVE THE UNITY OF THE AFM. THEN HE WOULD TRY TO ESTABLISH A TRUCE AMONG THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS IN ORDER TO MOVE ON TO PORTUGAL'S PRESSING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS. THEREFORE, SAID MORTON, THE UK WOULD PROBABLY "NOT BE TOO KEEN" TO TAKE ACTION IN LISBON THAT MIGHT RESULT IN CIVIL WAR.

5. SONNENFELDT SUMMED UP U.S. POSITION AS A DESIRE TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM AND EFFECT A HIGHLY DESIRABLE CHANGE IN A SITUATION IN WHICH MELO ANTUNES HAD REACHED A CRUCIAL POINT AND THEN SEEMED TO BE SLOWING DOWN. ALL AGREED THAT IT WAS HIGHLY DESIRABLE THAT GONCALVES BE REPLACED. OBVIOUSLY, SAID SONNENFELDT, WE DID NOT WANT CIVIL WAR. ALL THE STEPS WE HAD TAKEN WERE IN THE DIRECTION OF REPLACING GONCALVES, INCLUDING THOSE CONCERNING POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE REGARDING ANGOLA. WE HAD MADE CLEAR THAT WE WOULD NOT DO IT IF GONCALVES WERE INVOLVED, BECAUSE WE NEEDED A GOVERNMENT WE COULD DEAL WITH.

6. IN REPLY TO QUESTION, SONNENFELDT ASSURED MORTON
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SECRETARY WAS FULLY INFORMED ON PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS, THAT HE APPROVED THE INSTRUCTIONS SENT OUT CONCERNING PORTUGAL AND THAT HE SUPPORTED DEMARCHES MADE IN LONDON AND ELSEWHERE. THEREFORE, THE SECRETARY WAS COMPLETELY AWARE OF THE SITUATION. HE KNEW WHAT CARLUCCI DID AND REPORTED, AND, IN THE CASE OF THE INSTRUCTIONS SENT CHARGE SPIERS, HE WAS AWARE AHEAD OF TIME OF WHAT WE INTENDED TO INSTRUCT SPIERS TO DO. SONNENFELDT TOLD MORTON HE COULD REASSURE LONDON THAT THE SECRETARY WAS VERY MUCH ON BOARD ON THIS. SONNENFELDT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT U.S. AND UK JUDGMENTS OCCASIONALLY DIFFERED. IN THIS CASE, OURS WAS THAT THE APPEALS FROM MELO ANTUNES DESERVED A RESPONSE. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER IT WOULD HELP IF OUR DEMARCHE WERE RE-

INFORCED BY OTHERS. WE BELIEVED AND HE BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD, ESPECIALLY SINCE THERE WAS A GENERAL IMPRESSION THAT MELO ANTUNES MIGHT BE LOSING STEAM. HE SUGGESTED THAT TRENCH AND CARLUCCI, WHO ARE IN CLOSE TOUCH, AGAIN COMPARE NOTES. MORTON REPEATED THAT HE WAS CERTAIN CALLAGHEN WOULD WANT TO BE ALONGSIDE ON THIS IF IT WERE POSSIBLE.

7. RE EC-9, SONNENFELDT MENTIONED GERMAN DESIRE TO CONSULT IN THAT FRAMEWORK. HE SAID WE HAD NO PARTICULAR VIEW ON THAT SUBJECT. OBVIOUSLY THERE WAS AN IMPORTANT TIME ELEMENT, BUT WE HAD NO DESIRE TO SHORTCUT THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES OF THE NINE. IN FACT WE WOULD BE CALLING IN ITALIANS TODAY TO INFORM THEM OF U.S. ACTION AND REQUEST THEIR SUPPORT.

8. DURING A LATER CALL, FRG AMBASSADOR VON STADEN ALSO ASKED WHETHER INSTRUCTIONS SENT TO BONN CAME FROM SECRETARY. SONNENFELDT ASSURED VAN STADEN THAT THE DEMARCHE IN BONN WAS AN OFFICIAL APPROACH ON THE FULL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT. AS HE HAD DONE WITH MORTON, HE ASSURED VAN STADEN THAT SECRETARY BEING KEPT CAREFULLY INFORMED. TO VAN STADEN'S QUESTION OF WHETHER SITUATION IN PORTUGAL HAD CHANGED, SONNENFELDT REPLIED THAT IT HAD NOT. IF ANYTHING THERE WAS AN EVEN GREATER IMPRESSION OF A LACK OF MOMENTUM. HE ALSO INFORMED VON STADEN OF OUR INTENTION TO CALL IN ITALIANS, AND OF OUR DESIRE NOT TO INTERFERE IN EC-9 PROCESSES.

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9. DURING THE DAY WE BRIEFED LOCAL FRENCH AND DUTCH EMBASSIES ON OUR APPROACHES IN THEIR CAPITALS AND REASONS FOR THEM AND, BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE EC INVOLVEMENT INDICATED BY FRG RESPONSES, WE CALLED IN AND BRIEFED THE ITALIANS AND REPEATED THE INSTRUCTIONS TO ROME FOR ACTION. INGERSOLL UNQUOTE
INGERSOLL

SECRET

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